

Partnering with EPA, Healthy Places for Healthy People, 5-31-18

Lara Malakoff: Hi, everybody. Welcome to "Partnering with the EPA, Healthy Places for Healthy People" program.

This webinar is part of the 2018 CED Grantee Capacity Building Series. The series consists of live webinar based learning opportunities as well as information and resources and opportunities to engage with your program specialists and expert technical assistance providers. The series is designed to give you the support you need to successfully execute your CED projects. Keep an eye out for weekly emails that update you about upcoming events and provide important information for your grant.

I'm Lara Malakoff from ICF and I'm joined here today by Sharon Williams from the Office of Community Services and our guest presenter, whom Sharon will introduce shortly. Today's presentation is being recorded and you will be able to access the recording on the Community Economic Development page of the OCS website, that's at www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs. And more information on accessing the recording will be provided in an email from ocsregistrar@icf.com following the presentation.

A few housekeeping things before we get started. Throughout the presentation you can feel free to use the chat and Q&A features inside the WebEx interface. You can access these features from the blue icons at the top right of your WebEx window. And so you'll want to use the chat feature to contact the host about any technical issues you might encounter. And so if you use that be sure to select host in the send to box so that that message goes directly to our host. You can use the Q&A feature to type any content related questions as you think of them throughout the presentation and we'll likely hold those questions until the end when we will do a Q&A session.

So when you use that feature to ask a question, be sure to select the all panelist option in the send to box and that means that the question will go to the panelists and the host and we can make sure that we see that. Time permitting we'll also try to take some questions over the phone verbally, so we'll give you some instructions on how to do that at the end of the presentation so that you can unmute yourself and make sure that you can be heard. But in the meantime, all attendees have been muted to minimize any background noise.

So now, I will turn it over to Sharon Williams and she will get us started to introduce our speaker. And, Sharon, if you're there, please remember to unmute your phone and --

Sharon Williams: Can you hear me?

Lara Malakoff: We can hear you.

Sharon Williams: Okay. Hello everyone and welcome. I'm Sharon Williams with the Office of Community Services. As you all know, the goals and the objectives of the CED program are to create sustainable employment opportunities for individuals with low income. Through your efforts to achieve CED program goals, you are working to create communities that are healthy and economically vibrant. There are a variety of federal programs like CED that also focus on

assuring communities are economically successful, healthy and sustainable. The Environmental Protection Agency of the sustainable communities, Healthy Places for Healthy People program, a program that engages with community leaders and healthcare partners to create walkable, healthy, economically, vibrant neighborhoods.

I am pleased to welcome Margot Brown. She will highlight ways that the CED grantees can engage in with this program. Margot is a policy analyst in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Community Revitalization. She co-leads OCR's Healthy Places for Healthy People technical assistance program. Margot helps community partners with healthcare facilities to create healthy, walkable, economically thriving, vibrant neighbors in downtown. She formerly served as the director for EPA's office of Children Health Program Implementation and Coordination Division, and as a senior scientist at the National Institution of Childcare Health and Human Development. She earned her master of Science in Public Health and her Doctor of Science in Environmental Health from Tulane University of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

So let's welcome Margot. So Margot?

Margot Brown: Oh, okay. Thank you. Thank you very much, Sharon. And I just wanted to clear up something that is probably a little confusing. Sharon said I was from the Office of Sustainable Communities, which I am, but we recently -- when I say recently within the last week -- we've had a name change. And so we are now the Office of Community Revitalization, so it's not even -- I'm not even sure if our website is fully updated yet. So you might see some materials. If you go searching on the Internet for our office, you may see us written both ways. You may see us written as the Office of Sustainable Communities or the Office of Community Revitalization.

So I'd like to thank CED for inviting me this afternoon to present on one of our new programs. So I guess it's a little more than a year in development and it's called Healthy Places for Healthy People. So today I'm going to give you just a brief overview of the agency's mission and the background of my office. Then I'm going to talk a little bit about health, healthcare and healthcare and the economy, and then I'll get into describing the actual program, Healthy Places for Healthy People, and I'll conclude with some success stories of some of our communities from our first round of applicants.

So first I'm going to talk about our agency's mission and background. So EPA is developed to protect human health and the environment. And a lot of times I think when people think about EPA they really think about just the environment but our core mission is really human health and the environment. And when we say human health, we're thinking of a realm of public health. And so how our office comes into play within the larger mission of the agency is, where and how we build our communities impact human health, it impacts our land, it impacts our water.

So within our office we reside within the larger office of policy and our work is nonregulatory, so what we're doing is really providing assistance. We do do research and we develop tools and we do a number of other things, but the primary focus of our work is really providing technical assistance to communities. And for that reason, our work is always cross cutting and community driven. What we're really aiming to do is help communities grow in ways that are going to

protect human health and the environment, and specifically around with land use decisions, because when land use decisions are made at the local level and they're made with community input, they can be a tremendous catalyst for revitalizing local economies.

So our office specifically helps communities build places that are good for people's health, the environment, and the community. We're really supporting healthy, walkable, economically thriving neighborhoods in downtown that help achieve EPA's mission of protecting human health and the environment. And how we do this is through planning assistance. So we provide planning assistance to communities to create common vision and strategies for achieving what they want for the places where they live. And it's really imperative that I drive home the point that our work is completely community driven. Communities apply for our assistance but we're there to sort of guide the communities through the process and provide them with the resources they need to get to an outcome, but it is the outcome that a community will reach are completely driven by the community.

Because our work is so cross cutting, we partner with a number of different federal agencies. These are just a few and they do not represent all of the agencies that we work with. And we bring together federal partners. Specifically, we bring the partners to the communities so they can help the community's programs and initiatives grow. And as you can see, we've established a partnership with a host of different agencies. And the way we partner and work with each agency varies.

For example, we've done a tremendous amount of work with the Appalachian Regional Commission and our work with them has been twofold: One is that they have given us money to pay for technical assistance in communities in Appalachia. We have also been recipients -- I shouldn't say we, the communities have been recipients of money from the Appalachian Regional Commission, so when communities do work the Appalachian Regional Commission sometimes will offer implementation funds to those communities to help get their plans off the ground.

We've also been funded through HRSA, USDA, and a host of other federal partners who've said, if you meet a set of requirements we would like to provide technical assistance to these communities whether it's a high obesity community, whether it's a community that has rural health issues. It's just a wide array of communities that we're working in and we really need the support of our federal partners because our work is so cross cutting that we cannot do it without their support.

And most recently, we have set up an agreement with IMLS -- that's the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences -- and they've allowed their grantees to opt in for our technical assistance, which is the new approach for us. So there are lots of different ways that we're working with our federal partners to meet community's needs.

So we have a host of technical assistance programs that we work on in our office. The three ones that are most closely related are Cool and Connected, Local Foods for Local Places, and our newest program, Healthy Places for Healthy People. Cool and Connected is a planning assistance program that helps community members develop strategies and an action plan for using

broadband to create walkable connected, economically vibrant main streets and small town neighborhoods that improve human health and the environment. Communities can combine broadband services with other local assets such as cultural and recreational amenities to attract investment and people, and we're really trying to help diversify economies through Cool and Connected.

The other program that we have is Local Foods for Local Places. And this program supports locally led, community driven efforts to protect air and water quality and preserve open space and farm land. We're also trying to boost economic opportunities for local farmers and businesses and improve access to healthy local food and promote childhood wellness. And both of these programs have sort of been the launching pad for Healthy Places for Healthy People. And right now I'd like to share with you a video from a community that we work in with Local Foods for Local Places and it sort of became the brain child or catalyst for Healthy Places for Healthy People.

[Video]

Narrator: Local Foods, Local Places is a federal partnership to help communities create walkable, healthy and economically vibrant neighborhoods.

Dr. Dino Beckett: When I came back to practice medicine in Williamson, people's idea of a restaurant was fast food. And patients I've always been able to stress you need to be eating healthy foods, fresh vegetables, those things. So what happened is that there wasn't a lot of access.

Maria Arnot: Mingo County is rated lowest on many of the health ranking lists of high obesity rates, high unemployment rate. The mining community where we live, many people are unemployed and looking for work and, so, we have been trying to promote economic diversification through agriculture.

Dr. Dino Beckett: It's really easy to identify what are health indicators, what are things that we need to look at like blood pressure, diabetes, those things. But our idea really looked at the holistic approach to community development. So the first thing that we decided to do was to create a farmer's market and to help create access to fresh fruits and vegetables. One of the ideas that we had was to start a community garden.

Joshua Rhodes: [inaudible]

Maria Arnot: This space is maintained by a grower [inaudible]. He grows beautiful tomatoes as you can see and he sells them to a local restaurant. We also work with a growing [inaudible] program down here which is a [inaudible] ag program.

Joshua Rhodes: A year ago I was working in a mine and I got laid off. I would have never believed that I'd be growing vegetables and getting paid.

Maria Arnot: There's really been a serious [inaudible] mentor around local food process because I think the community's finally seeing the value in growing food and eating healthy.

Dr. Dino Beckett: Our goal from the beginning has been to help revitalize the downtown area. So what we've been able to do is locate many of our programs within the downtown area. We have the health center which is Williamson Health and Wellness. It has these far reaching tentacles that are all throughout the community and whether it be that the farmer's market, the community garden, the mobile market or the active living component. As we saw the decline of local restaurants, local eateries go down and we saw more chain restaurants moving in, the need to have more people having healthier options was something that we wanted to address.

Debbie Young: It took me a long time to get people around here to eat salads. Now, I probably sell more salads than I do anything. A lot of the produce, especially in the spring when it's available, we try to use the farmer's market.

Lonnie Bowen: It's been a good collaboration with Debbie because she's really artistic with the way she presents her food and that creates a real shining example of what entrepreneurship can do for a community.

Maria Arnot: One of the missions of the wellness center is to promote healthy eating to increase access to healthy foods to low income populations. And so they serve as really this anchor institution.

Dr. Dino Beckett: What Local Foods and Local Places means to us is that, you know, we have all these amenities in a downtown area and we want to keep that active and keep it vibrant. So being able to have everything nearby and to have people participating in that restaurant, farmers, it's very important to hold on to these smaller towns in rural America. This is what they were built on.

[end of video]

Margot Brown: So Williamson, West Virginia is really a shining example of healthcare, health economics and places [ph]. You heard over and over again in this video where they were talking about walkability and economic revitalization, and that really came about through the anchor institution there. In the video there was Dr. Beckett and he was really a pioneer because Main Street in Williamson had been dilapidated; it was vacant, and he made the strategic decision to relocate the Health and Wellness Center on Main Street.

And in doing that it became sort of, if you build it they will come, because a restaurant came, they now have a community garden and they've spurred a lot of growth and development in their community just based on a sound [inaudible] decision which is critical when we talk about health, healthcare and economics, because where and how we build will impact our health, environment and communities.

Lara Malakoff: And if I could just pause for one moment, it sounds like some folks are having some trouble hearing the audio. If other folks are having trouble hearing can you send us a note

via the chat function and we will -- okay. It sounds like one person is having trouble but it sounds like we have not heard from other folks, so we will follow up and we will continue on.

Margot Brown: Okay. So there was a recent study that showed that ZIP code was a stronger predictor of health outcomes than any other single predictor, including our genetic code. And so ZIP code is directly tied back to place. And what we also know about health is that the obesity in the United States has quadrupled. Childhood obesity has quadrupled from 5 percent to 21 percent in the last 30 plus years. Thirty-five percent of all U.S. adults are obese.

We have issues in a number of communities now with food deserts and nutrition access to healthy foods have become a key factor in lots of communities and a lack of physical activity. And so when it comes to people, there are a number of health concerns our country's facing. And with the rise in obesity and many health related problems, identifying these issues through place is how we've gotten to our program.

Another really important element is healthcare and the economy. When we work with healthcare partners and anchors like an institution like the Williamson Health and Wellness Center to revitalize downtowns we can improve access to healthcare and other basic needs, but hospitals can also be the number one economic driver in a community. When healthcare centers and hospitals step outside their roles as only healthcare providers, great things can happen because they are really a vital piece to the community's overall health and livability but they are also a vital piece to the community's economy.

There are just some important statistics here that I'd like to highlight. Healthcare makes up about one-sixth of our entire economy and it's often the largest employer in any town or city. Every dollar spent on healthcare in a community roughly adds about two dollars of additional business activity in that community.

Healthcare systems or healthcare in general spends close to \$800 billion in goods and services every year. They keep investment portfolios of around \$400 billion. They employ 4 percent of the nation's workforce and there's a tremendous ripple effect with healthcare anchor institutions and community. And so the direct and indirect impact the healthcare sector has on our economy is almost a trillion dollars. So it's got a great impact when you start to combine research; think about health and economics.

And the combination between health and economics is what has lead us to our most recent program called Healthy Places for Healthy People. Healthy Places for Healthy People is the intersection of place, health and the environment. Our technical assistance allows communities to identify their environmental assets and challenges which supports healthcare institutions and ultimately create economic opportunities, thereby improving health.

So when I say economic assets and challenges what am I referring to? An economic asset and challenge is that sometimes healthcare facilities or a hospital can make a decision to locate in a green site. What is a green site? A green site is a field that might be five to ten miles outside of a densely populated area like in a strip mall or on a highway, and when that decision is made sometimes businesses will grow around that particular anchor. And people are traveling outside

of their community to get healthcare, so they're using more drivable miles, they're not walking, oftentimes there are not multiple routes, transportation so it creates sort of a domino effect in terms of how it can impact the environment but then they're also assets. So

A lot of communities that we work in that have older buildings that have been abandoned, that can be reused, there are great parks and recreational spaces that can be used for farmer's markets or other community gathering places. And so really all three are critical to improve the community's well-being. You can't really do one without the other. They're all integrated together.

So what exactly is Healthy Places for Healthy People? It's a locally lead, community driven technical assistance for community leaders and healthcare partners. And when I say healthcare partners it could be community healthcare centers, it could be nonprofit hospitals, it could be other nonprofit organizations. It's really those individuals who want to improve their environment and health through healthy, walkable, vibrant neighborhoods in downtown. And the economic development angle is really what I'm going to focus on for the remainder of this presentation.

So what exactly is HP2? So while we're helping communities address environmental and human health issues in a holistic way, we recognize that healthcare facilities are economic anchors and can catalyze neighborhood and downtown renew vitalization and Williamson, West Virginia speaks exactly to this point. There's also other benefits as well as improving access to healthcare, access to fresh food and physical activities. It can spawn and support health focused entrepreneurs and businesses as well as improving the built and natural environment and making it easier for people to live healthier lives.

So when we think about what makes up a healthy community, it's really healthy people, healthy place and opportunity. And when I talk about opportunities I'm talking about economic opportunities. There are a lot of opportunities but for the purpose of this conversation, it's really the economic opportunities. Your community is not going to be healthy if you've got a poor economy and so one supports the other. And your economy and your community will not be healthy if your population is not healthy as well.

So here we have a slide that really focuses on the social determinants of health. And the World Health Organization has defined the social determinants of health as the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, age and the wider set of forces and systems that shape the conditions of our daily lives. And as you can see, one of the main pillars of the social terms of health is economic stability.

And as I just said in the last slide, economic stability is critical when talking about health and the environment. When we do our work and we're framing the objectives of our work, one of the things that we do is we ask communities that we're working with to think about the social determinates of health. And it comes back again to economic stability and how is economic stability and job creation in your community going to drive health? How is the community's access to healthcare going to drive health? What is your neighborhood and physical environment going to do to improve the health and well-being of the citizens in your community?

So in 2010 we launched a program called Healthy Places for Healthy People and we worked in ten communities of varying sizes, geographies and focuses. And, as you can see, we worked as far north as Bangor, Maine, as far south as Greensboro, Alabama. We did a lot of work in Nogales, Arizona; Los Angeles, California, and Port Townsend, Washington.

And each one of these communities was trying to address health and economic revitalization very differently. Later I'm going to provide some success stories of the communities that we worked in. We've recently selected our 2018 round of applicants and this year we'll be working in six communities across the United States. We'll be working in Weldon, North Carolina; Livingston, Alabama; Houma, Louisiana; Bunkie, Louisiana; Osceola, Missouri, and Wenatchee, Washington.

So how does our process work? The first thing to keep in mind is that this program is not a grant. We are not offering money. What we offer is technical assistance. And so you might be wondering what does technical assistance mean and what does it involve. Well, our approach is a well vetted, three clear processes.

And so once our communities have been selected, the first thing we do is work with the communities to assess and reframe their goals, and that is done through a series of three calls and we're planning for an actual workshop. So when we get to the convening and the rethinking, that is an actual onsite workshop that we deliver to communities. It's a two-day workshop and during those two days the community comes together and they think about what it is they'd like to achieve with respect to health and economic revitalization.

When the workshop is over, what we do is we have communities -- we take what we've learned and we help the community to develop an action plan with their goals. And so the real purpose of the action plan is to help to mobilize the resources in the community and to align funding and people so that they could act and realize their goals. And, again, this is a completely community driven process. EPA is there to help convene the federal side of these workshops and we work with a contractor who is leading or guiding the community through the actual workshop process, but the work itself is being done by the community. And the goals and the outcomes are reflected in the community's action plans.

And one of the things that we were talking about right before the call was that because we don't give you money, we do leave communities with a plan. And this plan is critical because one of the things that we've heard from a lot of different funding sources is we really wish when people applied for grants they had a clear idea of what they were trying to achieve. And this plan enabled communities to do that with a focus on health and economic development.

So some of the key outcomes from the work that we've done include developing strategies for place-based specific projects. We always say that one of the highlights of our program is creating the time and the space for communities to build new connections and to create a capacity for success. In every workshop that I've been to, and they've been very varied across the United States in terms of demographic characteristics, everybody always says thank you. You know, I've known Bob forever and I know that he leads the Chamber of Commerce but I never really

thought how the Chamber of Commerce intersected with our federally qualified healthcare center. And now, after your program, I'm able to understand how these two organizations work together to create economic opportunities in our community.

We also facilitate greater understanding of the community's specific needs and desires. And we expand awareness of opportunities for leveraging health partners. Again, what we're really doing here is leveraging health partners to serve as anchors for economic revitalization in communities. And as I stated before, we create action plans with goals and strategies for achieving the outcomes that the communities have identified as important.

So now I'd like to highlight a little bit of what we've learned in the communities that we've worked in this year. I picked three communities, but in essence all ten have incredible stories about the work that they've achieved in a very short time period. The first community that I'm going to talk about is Montgomery, Smithers, West Virginia. Montgomery and Smithers are two small towns that comprise of about 2,000 people total.

They are directly adjacent to one another and they're in the heart of coal country. As a former coal community they have lost hundreds of high paying jobs and recently they also lost a local university which decided to relocate. The unemployment rate in this community is about eight percent and one-third of the residents who live here live below the poverty line.

This community has been faced with obesity and economic decline for several years now. And when they applied for our assistance, their primary goal they said was to address the blighted buildings as the central component for the community's health and well-being, and also to address economic revitalization in their community. So they've had a host of outcomes that have been terrifically successful since their workshop late last summer but I'd like to really right now just focus on one piece of work and how it has spawned tremendous economic revitalization in the community as well as addressing the community's healthcare needs.

So as I said, there was a university in the community that decided to relocate and when they left they had what was a huge athletic center, it was about an 80,000 square foot athletic center. As luck and opportunity would have it, they were able to find a inhabitant for the vacated university space, but the people who bought that property, KVC, said we're really not interested in this 80,000-square-foot health facility but what in the world are we going to do with this space. And the members of the community were able to work with the YMCA to get them to come and open up a YMCA in Montgomery and Smithers, and they took this huge vacant space and they've created a tremendous economic opportunity now for the community.

What they've done is they leveraged the -- there's a local community college there and the KVC organization that bought the previous university, both of these, students and employees at those organizations, were given memberships to the YMCA. So you have a now a built-in group of initial people who are going to use this facility. In addition to that, you had the towns of Montgomery and Smithers who got together and decided to buy a one-year membership for every member of the community to the YMCA. And initially the local hospital wasn't really engaged in the Healthy Places for Healthy People initiative but there's not a lot of mental health

services in this community and the local hospital now with the YMCA is also providing mental healthcare services inside of this Y.

And because there's not another Y for 35 miles, there are now lots and lots of people who are coming in to Montgomery and Smithers to receive services. Because this building is located right along their main street or their main business corridor, what is likely to happen now is that it will spur economic development, because with hundreds of people coming in to use this facility on a daily basis there's going to be basic needs that some of these people will need while in Montgomery and Smithers and hopefully this siting of the YMCA in this location will spur additional economic development in Montgomery and Smithers.

The next community that we worked in or that I'd like to highlight is Nogales, Arizona. Nogales, Arizona is a small city with about 20,000 people. The city straddles the international border with Mexico, so the community is about 97 percent Hispanic and Latino. And more than 25 percent of the residents live 100 percent below the federal poverty line.

Unemployment in this community is at 12 percent and that's actually down from 17 percent in 2015. They are currently a food desert, and obesity is a major problem for this community. And this community, their main goal was they wanted to focus on downtown revitalization. And so since the workshop Nogales, Arizona is now making plans to open a new healthcare clinic downtown to improve access to healthcare. They're also revitalizing their main street and supporting downtown businesses.

So there is the Mariposa Community Health Center which is a federally qualified healthcare center and they've really stepped up to become a partner in revitalization in downtown Nogales. The Mariposa administrative building is moving downtown in May of 2018 and they're right now exploring other sites to establish a new clinic. This goes back to like sort of place and where you decide to build your clinic.

They could have taken that clinic out to a greenfield; instead they're looking at old buildings downtown with the intent of really revitalizing main street and spurring economic development and job creation. The Mariposa clinic is really committed to doing what it can to serve as an anchor to help draw other businesses back downtown, increase pedestrian traffic, and do other things to support new small businesses in the community.

My final example is the Pico Union neighborhood in Los Angeles, California. Pico Union is a predominantly low income Latino community within the city of Los Angeles. It's got about 100,000 people within this neighborhood. And the community is faced with a lot of challenges. They've got limited open spaces for outdoor activities, poor air quality, obesity, lack of healthy foods, it's the sort of the same story in every community that we work in.

The main applicant for Healthy Places for Healthy People was the new Economics for Women, which is a community development nonprofit organization. And what they really wanted to achieve with Healthy Places for Healthy People was to develop a health plan that would become a blueprint and would concentrate and forming community development strategies with an emphasis on social determinants of health to create a more prosperous community. And since the

workshop, this has been sort of one of the most unexpected outcomes of the work that we have done. They held a clean streets initiative to improve environment and safety on streets and that was identified by the community as a key priority.

So when we went in to work in this community, we typically do, like I said with our workshops, is very sort of organized and it's in a traditional sort of like meeting spaces and when we walked [ph] with the folks at [inaudible], they said that's not going to work for this community.

English is a barrier; a lot of people at the time were very concerned about a federal organization coming in with undocumented people living there; and they were very creative and they said, let's do a health fair. And as part of their health fair, which is pictured here on this slide, they said let's start with the community and find out what their needs or issues are. And one thing that rose to the top was safety.

And so while they were really thinking about prosperity, you can't get to prosperity without addressing street safety. And since that time, they've really taken the street safety issue very seriously and they recently presented at the American Planner's Association on street harassment [ph] and so what they're doing is very cutting edge because when we're thinking about planning, when we're thinking about health, when we're thinking about economic revitalization, we have to think about something as basic as safety. And if your streets are safe you're more likely to have more businesses come and invest in your community. You're also more likely to have people in the community, businesses and businesses create economic opportunities in their own community.

So with that I'd like to thank everyone for listening to my presentation today. Again, my name is Margot Brown. I'm at the Environmental Protection Agency and my phone number and email address are available. And if you really need to talk to me I always tell everyone, the squeaky wheel gets the oil. So I'll just remind you of that. I know that we're going to open the floor for questions and just a moment.

I want to say that we are hopeful that we will have another round of Healthy Places for Healthy People and I'm also hopeful that based on this presentation that a number of the grantees on this call would consider applying to our program just because it is a very low point of entry, it's only a two-page letter. Again, it's not a grant, but we do provide technical assistance. And when you received the grant like you already have from the federal government, we find that those applicants really understand and are very focused on what they want to achieve in their community and we tend to get great outcomes from working with communities and organizations like yourself. Once again, thank you.

Lara Malakoff: All right. Thank you so much, Margot. I think that that was a great presentation and we'd love to hear some questions from folks on the line if you've got any. So again, you can always submit a written question, you can do that through the Q&A feature in the WebEx platform. And make sure when you do so that you do select the all panelists option from the dropdown and that means that we'll all get it and we'll see it and that way we can address your question. And we'd also like to hear from you verbally, so that is another way to ask a question.

And so at this point we are going to in just a moment unmute everybody's lines and so that way you can chime in with your questions. But in order to eliminate any background noise for folks who are not currently speaking, who do not have any questions, we do ask that once we do go ahead and unmute you to please go ahead and mute your phone or your computer so that we don't pick up any of that background noise. And know that if we are picking up any background noise, if you forget to mute, we can mute you on the backend here. And if we do that you will need to kind of reach out to us via the chat function to say that you want to be unmuted and we can do that if you'd like to speak.

So at this point, please go ahead and mute your phone and we will unmute you on this end. So anyone have any questions that they would like to ask of Margot? So in the meantime, as we are waiting for some folks to ask questions. I've gotten a couple for you, Margot.

Margot Brown: Sure.

Lara Malakoff: I think one question is what would you suggest are the very first steps for someone who, a community development corporation like a CED Green Tea on the line to get started for applying and starting to engage with this program?

Margot Brown: So we have a call for applicants and so what we would do in the future most likely is reach out to CED and say to your grantees, look, we're having a call for applicants for Healthy Places for Healthy People. And also not just that, but our other programs as well as Cool and Connected and Local Foods for Local Places, and we encourage you to apply. We usually do the application process all together sort of bundled together; you apply to each one separately.

And it's just having an idea, it's having really a cornel or a seed of an idea of what you'd like to achieve in your community around health and economic revitalization. Again, it's a two-page letter and it's pretty pointed. I mean, we've got like five or six different main points that you're supposed to hit in the application.

And so what are the demographic characteristics of your community; what are the current economic assets or challenges that you're facing; and how would a planning assistant workshop help your community achieve its stated goals around health and economic revitalization.

So it's a really straight forward process. It's meant to be a very low barrier for entry because a number of the communities that we work with are very low income and a lot of them are not high capacity, so we're trying to meet communities where they are.

Lara Malakoff: Great. And what about a community development corporation like a grantee who is located in a community that you're already working in, that this program is already engaging with, how might they get involved?

Margot Brown: That's a great question. So I listed a number of the communities that we're working in in 2018 and the communities that we worked in last year and if there is a community that I mention that you are in, I think that the best approach would be to contact me and I would be more than willing to put you in touch with the community leads. I have learned that the

communities that we work with are all phenomenal people and they're very creative thinkers and they're always willing to add one more person to their tent, which is great because I always say, the more the merrier.

Lara Malakoff: Great. And it looks like we have a question that came in in writing and is from Brandon and he says, as a grantee what would you say are the greatest assets to applying for this program, why might a grantee want to do that?

Margot Brown: Why might a grantee want to do this? This goes back to funding. If you're a grantee I assume that you are constantly looking for different strings of funding. Also, based on the CED program, your program is based around economic development and I also know that food and agriculture systems are part of the CED program as well. So a number of those things come into play with your community.

And the greatest asset is, okay, we're trying to create jobs around this new facility, like a YMCA; how do we leverage the YMCA in our community? Or we have a new idea for a business incubator around developing a medical supply or a business incubator around training of some sort. And so as a grantee you already almost have a little bit of a leg up on the competition because you've thought about this, and you've really thought about what the economic challenges are in your community and what your needs are.

Lara Malakoff: Great. So with that, do we have any other questions from folks on the line? Feel free to ask those either verbally or type them into the Q&A box. All right. We'll give folks just a couple of more minutes to kind of think about their questions. In the meantime one other question, yes, we have recorded this presentation and we will be posting that and you'll be able to see the whole thing., Again, if you missed some pieces or just want to go back and refer to it on the CED page of the OCS website. And anyone on this call, you'll get an email from us letting you know when that's available. And we will also provide the slides for you to take a look at as well.

Margot Brown: You can also go to our website because we've got a lot of EPA or -- smartgrowth@epa.gov because we're able, as a website, you can really get a detailed description. I mean I gave you a 30,000-foot one-minute overview of Cool and Connected, Local Food for Local Places. Local Food for Local Places is a huge program in our office and they've worked in like probably 80 plus communities. So there was a question about what if some of our grantees are in that community. By going to our website you're going to get to see all of the communities that we're currently working in and that we have worked in in the past. You'll also get to see the Williamson video, there are other videos, and it just describes the work of our office at a more detailed level.

Lara Malakoff: Great. Thanks. And then we will, in our materials when we send out our materials, we'll be sure to include the link to your website as well so folks can get there. Any other questions on the phone or in writing? All right. Any other final words from you, Sharon, kind of on behalf of OCS?

Sharon Williams: I'd like to say thank you, Margot, for that wonderful presentation. And, yes, there's [inaudible] the Office of Community Service. We partner with states and community agencies to reduce the calls of poverty and increase opportunity in economic security for local and community individuals and families, and we revitalize communities so that really hit the nail on the head. I mean, you very much seem like what we do, your program's very much like what we do.

Lara Malakoff: Any final words from you, Margot?

Margot Brown: Well, I'm just hopeful that some of the folks who attended the call today will consider applying for our program because, as Sharon said, there's tremendous areas of overlap and we welcome the opportunity to work with all of you in some capacity given we have the ability to do so next year. Thank you for your time this afternoon.

Lara Malakoff: Well, thank you, Margot, for being with us.

And one final kind of plug for an upcoming opportunity as part of the 2018 Grantee Capacity Building Series, we do have the opportunity for you to have a virtual one-on-one meeting with an expert technical assistance provider. So if you have any questions about your grant or any kind of sticking points or challenges that you want to work through, please do sign up for those and we will be in touch to get that scheduled.

So I think with that, we can conclude this call. Thank you again everybody for joining us and we will be sure to be in touch when the recording and the materials are available and up on the website. And thank you again, Margot, for being with us and thank you, Sharon, for participating as well.

(END)